

ample means to ransom the prisoners, their rescue was effected, after six days of detention, and the most frightful maltreatment. But to the credit of these murderous and cruel Indians, it can be said that during all the time they held the girls as prisoners, there was never offered the least affront to their modesty. The rescue occasioned universal joy. The liberated girls were first taken to Gratiot's Grove, where they received every kindness and attention from the kind-hearted ladies of the settlement.¹

The great probity of Col. Gratiot's character made his advice and suggestions sought for on every side. He had the fullest confidence and friendship of Gen. Dodge, who constantly consulted with him. At the request of the General, Col. Gratiot had induced the Winnebagoes to meet in council at the head of the Four Lakes, on the 25th of May, 1832. And there followed a long "talk" to the Indians by Gen. Dodge, who commenced by saying: "My friends, Mr. Gratiot, your father, and myself have met to talk with you. Having identified us both as your friends in making a sale of your country to the United States, you will not suspect us of deceiving you."² Gen. Dodge was not satisfied by this talk of the good faith of the Winnebagoes, and shortly thereafter he again sent for Col. Gratiot, arrested three of the principal chiefs as hostages, and sent them to Gratiot's Grove. That point being the residence of Col. Gratiot, and included in hostile territory, it became a place of much importance. A stockade was built there for the protection of the white settlers.

After the close of the Black Hawk War, Col. Gratiot gradually closed up his business of mining and smelting, and prepared to open up a large farm adjoining the "Grove." Erecting a house on a beautiful site, built in the French fashion, with its long and wide galleries and its many ample rooms, and no one who ever visited it up to the time it was consumed by fire, in 1853, can ever forget its hospitable shelter.

¹ The names of those girls were Rachel and Sylvia Hall. The former was fifteen and the latter seventeen years old when taken prisoners.

² Smith's *Hist. Wisconsin*, i, 416, 417.